

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 354.—VOL. VII.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1890.

PRICE 1½d.

## BRANKSOME TOWER.

The feast was over in Branksome Tower,  
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower;  
Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,  
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell.

SUCH are the opening words of that famous 'Lay' by which the name of Branksome Tower was to be made familiar to the English reading public. To readers of Scottish history, and to the later collectors and readers of Scottish ballads, the name had long been well known, as indicating the headquarters of the most powerful and aggressive of all the Border clans; but it required the stirring verse of Scott, the charms of love and chivalry and romance which his vivid imagination wove around the name and the place, to make Branksome as well known on the English as it had been on the Scottish side of the Border.

The tower of Branksome is situated about four miles to the south-west of Hawick, in Roxburghshire, on the banks of the Teviot. Standing as it does on one of the great highways running southwards into England, it is easy of reach; but the town of Hawick affords perhaps the best starting-point. And the fine woods which modern culture has reared in the place of the old native forests which had long before died out or been destroyed, flanking as they do the rising grounds on either side of the Teviot, or bordering the highway, give a warmth and softness to a landscape that otherwise would wear the wild and somewhat solitary aspect which distinguishes in general these upland Border valleys. The place, moreover, is surrounded on every side by scenes that have been rendered memorable in many a Border song and story, and cannot fail to interest deeply any visitor who is familiar with the literature and history of the district.

This autumn morning does not promise well for the weather. It is cold, and what is worse, it is not clear. A damp chill mist hangs upon the mountain-sides, and spreads its cold gray skirts

along the valley. Everything in nature seems to be conscious that at this season the dun motley of October is your only wear, and is correspondingly depressed. The Teviot is slightly swollen and discoloured by last night's rain, and perhaps the angler is the only living thing who rejoices; for a slight freshet such as this always makes it worth his while to busk the alluring fly. There is scarce a breath of wind, and the trees that border the river look down upon it in sullen silence, their dank garments of fading foliage hanging heavily about them. At first, the general melancholy would seem to prelude a day of rain; but by a happy chance the tide of appearances chose to turn the other way. Things began to look brighter; and as we ascended the valley, became positively cheerful. For a breeze had sprung up. The mists withdrew themselves slowly towards the hill-tops, dragging their ragged skirts behind them, laying bare, point by point, the broken masses of birch and pine, or the long brown slopes of withered bent, flecked by straggling flocks of sheep. By-and-by, too, the sky lightened, till at length the sun began to show itself through a thin veil of mist, hanging its disc of silver over Broadhaugh Hill. A little later, it had flung the veil away, and with undimmed splendour looked out upon the land.

But this was not till long after we had passed the ancient keep of Goldielands, which, although we saw it not, we knew stood up there on the left in gray ruggedness, its battlemented top high above the engirdling trees. We are entering the defiles down which the Teviot seeks its seaward way, and before us we had seen, on the right,

Where Bortha hoarse, that loads the meads with sand,  
Rolls her red tide to Teviot's western strand

—and had seen it with regretful eye. For up Borthwick Water was Harden Burn, and on Harden Burn was Harden Castle, and beneath Harden Castle was Harden Glen, where Wat of Harden kept 'Harden's kye.' But Harden, full as it is of attraction to the Border pilgrim, is not

our goal to-day. Like Sir William of Deloraine, our watchword this morning is, 'For Branksome, ho!'

As we pass upwards into the narrowing valley, everything is secondary in appearance to the magnificent trees that flank the highway, and which, in their richly-variegated hues, present ever new vistas of beauty to the eye. Here, the lofty pine lifts itself in dark and stately grandeur, side by side with the spreading chestnut in all its splendour of orange and saffron tints. There, the blood-red beech hangs out its polished leaves, and the oak its wealth of warmer bronzes and browns. The ash, slow to blossom and slow to decay, still drapes itself in foliage as green as emerald; while the birches, ever fairest among the fair, droop gold-flecked tresses in the morning light. One could stay all day among those trees, feasting the eye upon their endless variety of light and shade, of colour and form, and overshadowed by the beauty of their melancholy boughs.

But here we are at Branksome. Not much, after all, to see—to the outward eye. A white-washed mansion house, still inhabited, embracing in its design traces of an ancient castellated keep with the meaningless outlines of a commonplace modern country residence. Yet it is a famous place.

The Scott, to rival realms a mighty bar,  
Here fixed his mountain-home.

This ancient stronghold, of which we have now but one tower standing, was the seat of a line of chieftains only a little less powerful than their king, and more tyrannical and aggressive at times than kings could safely afford to be.

Of Branksome—or Branhholme, as the Buccleuch family now spell it—we have traces into a remote past of our history. Long, possibly, before it bore the name by which it is now known, it was the scene of contention and strife. For up on the heights to the north will be found numerous round camps or earthworks, of great strength and of considerable size, constructed originally, in all probability, by the Welsh branch of the Celts, who occupied this territory before the Romans came and taught them how to build with stone and lime. And a few miles to the south of it runs the mysterious rampart, 'The Catrail,' also pointing to wars and bloodshed in the distant and unrecorded past. When we do hear of Branksome in the records of authentic history, it is as part of the barony of Hawick, and in possession of an English family of the name of Lovel. This family of Lovel, like many of the Saxon and Norman aristocracy in Scotland between the time of Malcolm Canmore and that of Bruce, held lands in both England and Scotland; but when the War of Independence broke out in the end of the thirteenth century, and the Scottish people made it manifest by sword and spear that they intended to assert and maintain their independence as a nation, these dual members of the aristocracy were compelled to choose whether they should remain with the north or with the south country—with the Scotch or with the English. Those who adhered to the Scottish cause lost, as a matter of course, their estates in England; and those who adhered to Edward and his policy lost equally their lands in Scotland.

From the time of Bruce, therefore, Branksome was no longer the property of the southern Lovels, but was held successively by Baliols and Comyns, by Murrays and Douglasses, down to about the end of the fourteenth century.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century, Branksome was in the possession of John Inglis, lord of Manor, who in 1420 granted to Robert Scott of Murdiestone, in Lanarkshire, the half of the lands of Branksome in perpetual feu and heritage, for payment yearly of a silver penny, in name of 'blench farm,' and this 'if asked only.' But about a quarter of a century later, Inglis of Manor had apparently found that that half of Branksome which remained to him was difficult and troublesome to keep, on account of its being so much subject to inroads and harryings by the thieves of the English Border. Hence, being a man evidently of pacific temperament, and not wishing to be further involved in disastrous feuds and reprisals, he gladly accepted an offer made to him by Scott to exchange the lands of Murdiestone for the other half of Branhholme. Scott did not mind the English reivers much. He is said only to have remarked, when this danger was referred to, that the bees of Cumberland were as good as those of Teviotdale. That is as much as to say, that if the English stole from him, he could also steal from them. In this way the Scotts of Buccleuch and Murdiestone became the sole lords of Branksome, and remain so to this day. The Scotts of the neighbouring estate of Harden, from whom Sir Walter Scott loved to trace his descent, were of equal ancestry with the Scotts of Buccleuch; but the latter sept, by the vigour, courage, and force of character which successive heads of their family displayed, soon made their power felt, and became before long the most distinguished of the Scott clan.

And not only so, but the Scotts of Buccleuch and Branksome soon made themselves felt in the councils of the nation; and it was due to his great power and influence that Sir Walter Scott of Branksome, in 1526, was desired by the boy-king James V. to take him out of the hated keeping of Angus, upon the attempt to effect which was fought the sharp skirmish of Halidon Hill, near Melrose. It was at this battle that the foundation was laid of the long-standing and bloody feud between the Scotts and Kerrs,

When Home and Douglas, in the van,  
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,  
Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear  
Reeked on dark Elliot's Border spear.

Nor, when the English, as a nation, invaded Scotland, was Branksome spared; for in 1533, 1545, and again in 1570, the tower was burned down and sacked. 'Burning' did not then mean quite what it would mean now, since the upper floors only of these old keeps were formed of wooden beams, the lower of stone vaults or arches; consequently, to be burned down would mean little besides the destruction of furniture and movables; and the tower and surrounding walls were easily put in repair again, when the place became as strong for refuge or defence as before.

The part of the ancient tower of Branksome, as it now stands, belongs to the restoration which followed upon its burning, and partial destruc-

tion by gunpowder, in 1570. Traces and evidences of this antiquity are still to be discovered upon it. On an arched doorway is one of those inscriptions in which a rude and rough-living people seem to have been fond of embodying some lesson which perhaps they were at times painfully conscious their lives and actions did not teach :

In . varld . is . nocht . nature . hes . vroucht . yat . sal .  
lest . ay .

Thairfore . serve . God . Keip . veil . ye . rod . thy . fame .  
sal . nocht . de kay .

Along with this are the names of Sir Walter Scott and his wife Margaret Douglas, with the date 1571. Above these also are the arms of the Scotts and Douglasses, with a further inscription setting forth that Sir W. Scott of Branksome 'began the work upon the 24th of March 1571, wha departitt at God's pleasure the 17th April 1574,' and that 'Dame Margaret Douglas, his spous,' completed the aforesaid work in October 1576. The process of restoration had thus been begun early in the spring of the year after that in which the tower had been blown-up and burned, and was continued through six successive summers. The castle as rebuilt was a place of vast strength, and of great extent within the walls; though since then it has undergone so many changes and vicissitudes that neither 'Schir Walter Scot, Knycht,' nor his good 'Dame Margaret Douglas, his spous,' would be likely to know it, could they return once more.

But Branksome, when all is said and done, is not sought after for any casual splendour or interest which sober history may shed upon it. 'What's Yarrow,' asked Wordsworth in a mood of pleasant mockery—

What's Yarrow but a river bare  
That glides the dark hills under?  
There are a thousand such elsewhere  
As worthy of your wonder.

Yet Wordsworth knew that Yarrow was to him as a household word in his home at Grasmere—that its gathered renown of pathos and pain had haunted his imagination and stirred his soul to poetic impulses—and that over and above the material existence and surroundings of that 'river bare,' there was still to the eye of his mind 'another Yarrow.' Not even its 'grace of forest charms decayed,' not even its air of 'pastoral melancholy,' could have so drawn and magnetised the poet's soul, were it not that the very ripple and flow of its river were musical of that past in which the lover bled and the lover died in the 'dowie holms of Yarrow.' And if there was 'another Yarrow' to Wordsworth, there is 'another Branksome' to us. It is not the memory of the fighting Barons of Buccleuch, with their tumultuous raids and unending quarrels, which draws the pilgrim's feet to Branksome's Tower, but the memory of events which the imagination of the Minstrel has conjured up, and which have made for themselves a local habitation and a name.

For have we not here, in the 'Nebbie's Tower' of the present day, the 'old Lord David's western tower' in which the weird Lady of Branksome had that 'secret bower' of hers that was so jealously 'guarded by word and by spell'? And

is not behind us 'Branksome's good green wood,' where the elvish Page held Lord Cranstoun's steed the while his master sat with the Flower of Teviot beneath the 'hawthorn green'? And down in the meadow beneath the castle, have we not the battle-ground of dark Musgrave and the champion of Buccleuch; and may we not in imagination again see the lists set up—the gorgeously-attired heralds proclaiming the issue—the two steel-clad champions riding forth against each other, with visor closed and lance in rest—the shout of assault, the deadly shock, the prostrate warrior—the sudden appearance of Deloraine, ghastly from illness and pallid with rage—the discovery in the victorious champion of Buccleuch of one long accounted as an enemy of that house? But now, when he is led before the Lady of Branksome as the lover of her daughter, the saviour of her son, she breaks her 'silence stern and still.'

'Not you, but Fate, has vanquished me;  
Their kindly influence stars may shower  
On Teviot's side and Branksome's tower,  
For pride is quelled, and love is free.'  
She took fair Margaret by the hand,  
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand;  
That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:  
'As I am true to thee and thine,  
Do thou be true to me and mine!  
This clasp of love our bond shall be.'

The view from Branksome is necessarily limited, and this morning it is rendered even more so by the cloud of sunlit mist that hangs on the opposite hill. The tower is situated on the edge of a slight ravine which has been hollowed out by a little mountain-stream which here falls into the Teviot. The ravine is thickly clothed with trees. In front is the narrow vale down which the Teviot winds, approaching in one of its long curves almost to the foot of the bank on which the castle stands, then, sweeping away in the opposite direction, it leaves between it and the tower the 'nether lawn' on which the champions fought. The castle itself, in its palmy days, must, from its situation, have admitted of easy and formidable fortification; but all traces of wall, or bastion, or barican are now gone. The green lawn, variegated by beautiful beds of foliage plants, covers the courtyard where the old-world warriors thronged to the muster; and the 'Dule Tree' is but a great battered and branchless trunk. A splendid ash-tree stands in the centre of the court behind the house, and a very old plane grows fast by the more ancient part of the tower itself. These, and a few yew-trees, seem, with the inscriptions, all that points to a past more remote than a few generations. And yet here three centuries ago were heroic and masterful doings—not seldom also acts of cruelty and tyranny—when Buccleuch stood guardian of the Middle Marches—

Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers  
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers  
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

The vale of the Teviot at this point, and higher up, has nothing to distinguish it from fifty other similar vales in the south of Scotland. There is the same winding of the river, 'cutting me out a huge cantle' here, and laying down a breadth of alluvial meadow there; the same rounded hills, sweeping down in soft outline to the

water's edge, their broad shoulders covered with bent and bracken, now brown and withered in the October wind. But the river still bears in its song the voices of the past, though now no bale-fires blaze upon its banks, no steel-clad warriors ride along its 'wild and willowed shore.'

J. R.

## MY SHIPMATE LOUISE.

THE ROMANCE OF A WRECK.

### CHAPTER XLII.—I ESCAPE.

IF I had witnessed the idleness of protest and remonstrance and appeal on board the barque, I must have held entreaty to be tenfold more useless in the face of the mortification of the carpenter and his crew, increased as their temper was by the irritation and the fatigue of hard and useless work. I might at once be sure that they had no intention of suffering me to leave the island until they quitted it themselves for good. There would be also distrust; the fear that I might contrive to run away with the ship. Yet I had still to find out what they meant to do; what their plans were for the night. I knew what I wanted, and I remember what I prayed for as I tramped solitarily backwards and forwards upon the edge of the herbage where it came thin to the beach.

Seven men entered the long-boat and shoved off. The carpenter remained; with him was the sailor named Woodward. They flung themselves down upon the ground with an air of exhaustion, and so lay smoking their pipes. After a while, the carpenter called to me. I approached him leisurely. He asked me if I could not remember the number of paces from the beach, and eyed me so surlily as he put the inquiry that I began to think he suspected I could tell if I chose.

'If Wilkins can't remember,' I exclaimed, 'why should I be able to do so—I, whose opinion of this business you well know? I do not recollect the number of paces. I wish I did, for I am more anxious than ever you can be that you should come at this gold, that we may sail away, and end the most cursed adventure that ever a man was forced into.'

The heat and the evident sincerity with which I spoke these words slightly subdued him, and his ugly face relaxed its threatening look. Finding him silent, I said: 'What do you mean to do?'

'Stop here all night,' he answered shortly. 'Stop here, I've told ye, till we've found the money.'

'You will leave some men aboard the ship to look after her?'

'Two'll be quite enough,' he answered. 'How much looking after do she want in weather of this pattern? If we don't meet with the gold afore dark—and there'll be no chance of that, I allow—we must all be at hand to tarn to at daybreak.'

I asked no further questions; and the fellow sank into silence, both he and the other sucking at their pipes, whilst they seemed to hunt with their eyes over the ground as they lay with their heads propped on their elbows.

I saw Miss Temple on the poop watching the approaching boat. Very well could I imagine

the feeling which would possess her when she perceived that I was not among the occupants of the little craft! The boat clumsily drove alongside, and the men sprang on board over a short rope gangway ladder that had been dropped. They went to work at once, as though in a hurry to get the furling job over, that they might return. This done, they descended, and came to a pause at the gangway, as though giving what news they had to the two seamen that had been left behind. They then entered the boat afresh and leisurely made for the island. As they jumped on to the beach, I noticed that the man Simpson had taken the place of Forrest, who had been left to keep a lookout with Wetherly. I felt instantly very uneasy on observing this. There was no other man of all the crew whom I would not sooner have wished to be Wetherly's associate than that impudent, mutinous, bold-faced young seaman. To think of Miss Temple alone with those two men! one to be trusted, as I hoped and believed; but the other as insolent and defiant a rascal as could be imagined of any forecastle blackguardly hand! I gazed eagerly at the barque, and was glad to find that the girl had gone below. I earnestly prayed that she would have the sense to keep in hiding. There was the long night before her, and Wetherly might sleep.

Never since the hour of our losing sight of the Indianman had I felt half so worried, half so distracted with fears and forebodings. I withdrew to a distance from that part of the beach where I had been walking, that the workings of my mind might not be seen in my face; and thankful was I afterwards, when I had somewhat cooled down, that the carpenter did not offer to approach or speak to me; for such was the passion my anxiety for Miss Temple had raised, that I believe a single syllable of rudeness would have caused me to fall upon him—with what result it would be useless here to imagine.

There was about an hour and a half of daylight remaining. When the sailors had secured their boat, they went to supper. In lieu of tea, they drank rum-and-water, and this pretty plentifully.

'Won't ye jine us, Mr Dugdale?' called out the carpenter. 'No call to eat along with us if you object to our company. Ye can have your food separate; but you'll be wanting to eat anyhow.'

'He must be a poor sailor who is not good enough company for me,' I exclaimed, having by this time mastered myself; and forthwith I took my seat amongst them, and fell to upon a piece of salt beef, whilst I got a stronger beat for my pulse out of the pannikin of grog that I drained.

The men's talk was all about the gold. 'If it ain't under them trees,' said one of them, 'it'll ha' to come to doing what the gent told us: starting at a hundred paces from the wash of the water there and digging in a line till we strikes it.'

'What'll them as hid it have wropped it up in?' exclaimed another.

'Canvas,' answered the carpenter shortly.

'Which'll have rotted by this time, I allow, and the money'll be lying loose,' said a sailor.

'Who'll get the first chink of it?' cried Wilkins.

Exclamations of this sort I observed worked a general sense of elation in them; and the rum



helping their spirits, they began to crack jokes, and their laughter was loud and frequent. The scene, to any one who could have viewed it without distress, must have been thought admirable for its character of soft romantic beauty. The western atmosphere was brimful of the reddening light of the descending sun; under it, the smooth ocean lay in dark gold that came sifting out into a cool azure, which then ran with an ever-deepening tint of blue into the clear liquid distance. There was nothing in the wildness and rugged looks of the fiery-faced recumbent seamen to impair the tenderness of this picture. On the contrary, their roughness seemed to accentuate its gentle beauty, as the silence of a calm midnight at sea may be heightened by some gruff human voice speaking at a distance, or by some rude sound that assists the hearing as a contrast.

The carpenter looked towards the sun.

'Don't let's waste no more time,' he cried; 'let's attack that third clump there afore it falls dark.'

They sprang to their feet, seized their several tools, and in a few moments were hard at it, digging, boring, but in silence, for their efforts were too heavy for talk or for laughter. The sun went down whilst they were still toiling. They had discovered nothing, and the first to give up was the carpenter. He sent his shovel flying through the air with a loud curse.

'I'm done for to-night,' he roared, 'Where did them scowbankers hide it? It'll have to be as Mr Dugdale says. 'Morrow marning we'll start at a hundred paces from the beach. We're not here to miss it, and we'll have it if we rip the guts of this island out of her forty fathoms deep!'

He was furious with temper and exhaustion, and stepping to a kettle that was full of rum-and-water, he half filled a hook-pot and swallowed the contents to the dregs, afterwards pitching the vessel from him with an air of loathing and passion. The men, throwing their implements into a heap, came slowly to where the rum and provisions were, cursing very freely indeed, some of them groaning with weariness, smearing the sweat off their foreheads along their naked arms, and stretching their clenched fists above their heads in postures of yawning. Every man of them took a long drink, and then they slowly fell to filling their pipes whilst they continued to heap curses upon Captain Braine and his companion for not having buried the money in a place where it might be easily got at.

My heart was now beating quickly with anxiety. What was the next step they meant to take? Would the carpenter change his mind and carry all hands of us aboard? I observed him light his pipe, and then take a look around with as evil an expression on his face as ever I had witnessed in it. He next trudged with a deep sea-roll in his walk down to the tree to which the boat was attached, and having carefully examined the knot, as though to make sure that the line was securely fastened, he stood gazing awhile at the little craft, as though considering, afterwards sending his eyes in another rolling stare round the horizon as far as it lay visible. I watched him furtively, but with consuming anxiety.

'Tell ye what, mates,' he suddenly sung out, rounding upon the men and approaching them; 'there's nothen to hurt in this weather, and the

barque's going to lie as quiet as if she was laid up. We'll just stop where we are; but a lookout'll ha' to be kept, and the boat must be watched. Better settle the order at once. The lookout will sit in the boat, case'—he added with a sarcastic leer in my direction—'there might be savages about unbeknown to us with a settlement aback of that hill amidships there.—What d'ye say, Mr Dugdale?'

'I have no longer command,' I answered; 'it is for you to arrange as you will. Why you desire to keep me here, I cannot imagine. Why not put me aboard, that the young lady may have the comfort of my presence.'

'She don't want no comfort,' he answered coarsely; 'she's all right. The number of paces the capt'n talked of may come to ye by daybreak, and we're all at hand to tarn to.'

I made no answer.

The men roamed about in twos and threes, but never very far. I believed I could trace an uneasiness in their behaviour, as though they had consented to sleep out of the ship in obedience only to the carpenter's wishes, and were now reconsidering their acquiescence with some indecision of mind. I earnestly hoped that this might not prove so, and watched and listened to them with my heart full of wretchedness. The carpenter was seated with another man, and conversed with him in low notes, which trembled to my ears like the subdued growling of a dog. I strolled away to a distance, but was neither followed nor called to.

The time passed very slowly. The men grew weary of moving about, though for some while the mere sensation of the hard soil was a delight to them, now that the air was deliciously cool and they had no work to do and could roam at will. They came in a body together and seated themselves round about the carpenter and his companion, drinking by the starlight, with the frequent glare of the lighting of pipes throwing out the adjacent faces, till it was like looking into a camera obscura. They talked much, but my attentive ear detected a drowsy note stealing into the sound of grumbling that stood for their conversation.

It was drawing on to the half-hour past ten when I stepped leisurely up to the huddle of shadows, and looking over them as they lay in all sorts of postures, I exclaimed: 'Which is the carpenter?'

'Here he is,' answered the voice of Lush.

'Are the men going to make a bedroom of this spot?' said I.

'Ay,' he answered. 'Where else? Ye han't surely come across a hotel in your lonely rambles?'

These words he pronounced without intending offence, though such was the coarseness of the ruffian that he could say little which was not offensive. One or two of the fellows laughed.

'I shall look out for comfortable quarters for myself,' said I. 'I have no fancy for lying amidst all this high grass. There may be snakes about.'

'No, no!' exclaimed one of the men; 'there's no snakes here, sir. I've kept a bright lookout. There's nothen to be afear'd of.'

'Ye'll find the grass a soft bed,' exclaimed the carpenter.

'Thank you,' I answered; 'but since I am detained here against my will, allow me at least to choose my own mattress. Should you want me, you'll find me about eighty paces yonder, where there's some clean sand betwixt the bushes.' I pointed to a spot a little distance past the curve of the lagoon.

'It don't signify to us where ye sleep, sir,' exclaimed Lush; 'we shan't be wanting ye till the morning, by which time I hope you'll have recollected the distance Capt'n Braine named. If you should feel a dry in the night, ye'll find a kettle-full of rum-and-water alongside yon breaker that's standing upright.'

'Thanks,' said I; 'good-night.'

There was a rumbling sleepy answer of 'good-night' from amongst them.

The spot I had chosen gave me a clear view of the lagoon, and by consequence of the boat. There was no grass here, and the bushes were small and stunted, as though starved by the sandy character of the soil. Yet they furnished a dark surface, amid which I could crawl on my hands and knees without risk of being seen from the place occupied by the men. I sat down to wait and watch. Over the tops of the bushes alongside of me I could just distinguish the figures of the sailors when one or another of them rose apparently to obtain a drink from the kettle. After I had been seated some twenty minutes or so, I spied one of them walking towards the boat. His dark shape showed with tolerable distinctness when he emerged from the comparative obscurity of the herbage into the dull gleam of the stretch of coral foreshore. He entered the boat, and then I lost sight of him, for the water past him lay in a trembling sheet of gloom, and his outline was absorbed in it. From time to time I could hear the voices of the seamen conversing; but shortly after eleven all was silent amongst them, and then the indescribable hush of the great ocean night settled down upon the lonely rock.

There was nothing in the stirring of the bushes to the wind, in the dim and delicate seething in the lagoon, in the hollower note of surf lightly tumbling at the back of the island, to vex this vast oppressive stillness. I thanked God that there was no moon; yet could have earnestly prayed for more wind and for a few clouds to obscure something of the small fine spangling of the atmosphere by the stars. I could see no light upon the barque; she lay in a little heap of faintness, what with her white sides and hanging white topsails, out in the gloom.

Presently, when I had supposed that all hands saving the fellow in the boat were sleeping, I saw a figure slowly coming my way. I gathered by his posture, as I dimly discerned it, that he was staring among the bushes as he advanced. He slightly lurched as he stepped, and it was not until he was within twenty feet of me that I perceived he was the carpenter. I pillowed my head on my arm, drew my feet up, and feigned to be in a sound slumber. He arrived abreast of me, stood looking a little, and then went slowly back to the others.

The scheme I had made up my mind to adventure was one of extraordinary peril. Yet I was quite certain that the dreadful risk would provide me with my last, indeed my only chance. I was

now immovably convinced that though Captain Braine's story of the existence of the island was a fact, his assurance of a large fortune in hidden gold was a madman's fancy. The men would be finding this out; what they would then do, I could not conjecture; but the menace involved in their lawlessness, their rage of disappointment, their determination (certain to follow) to find their account in the barque and her cargo at all costs, was so heavy, so fraught with deadly peril to Miss Temple and myself, that I was resolved that night to make one prodigious dash for liberty, leaving the rest to fate. Once during that day it had occurred to me to make a rush for the boat and shove off, leaving the men without any means of pursuing me; but a little consideration showed me that the risks of such an attempt were all too fearfully against me. If I valued my life for my own as well as for the girl's sake, I must not fail; and yet failure seemed almost certain. Before I could have liberated the line that secured the boat, sprung into her, lifted one of her heavy oars to shove her off with, the men, who had always been working within a hundred and fifty yards of the beach, would have been upon me. Or supposing I had managed to slide the boat a few fathoms away before they arrived, half of them would have been probably able to swim faster than I could scull the clumsy fabric, whilst my erect figure must have supplied an easy mark for the stones which those remaining on shore would have hurled at me. No! I had mused upon and then utterly dismissed that scheme, coming back to my first resolution, which I now lay waiting for the right moment to execute.

At half-past twelve by my watch, which the starlight enabled me to read, the man who had first entered the boat came out of it, and was replaced by another, whose figure I followed with my sight as he passed across the beach and disappeared in the little structure. For another hour I continued to watch, to wait, to hearken with every sense in me strained to its acutest limit; during which time the island continued sunk in the profoundest stillness of this midnight, saving always the noise of the rippling of waters and of the breezy stirring of the bushes. Then with a few words of appeal to God for courage and support, I started to crawl round past the spot where the men were sleeping, that I might arrive at the beach under cover of the tall grass, which would hinder them from observing my form as I approached the tree to which the boat's line was secured.

The soil ran in a sandy trail through the bushes hereabouts, and I got along pretty nimbly, crawling noiselessly, feeling ready to burst at times, owing to the almost unconscious holding of my breath, forced upon me by my apprehension lest I should be observed or overheard. Presently coming to the trees at whose base the men had dug, I stood up, not fearing detection here, and very rapidly gained the growth of bushes which darkened a space of land to the north, betwixt the place where the men lay and the broad shelf of white beach where, as the fellows had supposed, the Spanish brigantine had driven ashore. I now dropped on my knees and hands again, and in this posture skirted the high herbage that grew down to where the coral grit

provided no soil for such vegetation, until I came to the tree, close up against which I rose, that my shape might appear as a part of the trunk. Then, with an eager trembling hand, I cast the line adrift, and sinking again on my knees and hands, crawled upon the dark surface of the verdure to where it went nearest to the northern horn of the lagoon, where, still crouching, I remained for a little space watching.

In a few minutes the liberated boat, feeling the action of the wind, slowly floated off.

At every instant I was prepared to hear a shout from the shore or from the fellow who was supposed to be at watch in the boat. Yet it soon grew plain that my utmost hopes were to be confirmed by the heavy rum-influenced slumber that had overtaken the watchman, and that lay in lead upon the closed lids of the wearied sailors upon the grass. My heart was loud in my ears as I crouched watching. Presently the boat had slipped to some considerable distance from the shore, and was sliding seawards out to the wide yawn of the lagoon broadside to the ripples and the breeze. Then pulling off my coat and waistcoat and shoes and small-clothes, I crawled down on to the clear gleam of the beach, waded into the water, and struck out for the barque.

I was a fairly good swimmer; of old the exercise had been one of delight to me. The water was cool, but not chilling; I seemed to find a buoyancy in me, too, as from excess of brine in the dark surface, through which I gently pushed at first, lest I should raise a light of phosphorescence about me. At intervals I would pause, faintly moving my arms, that I might keep myself afloat, and hearkening in a very agony of expectation. But all continued silent ashore. Now and again I caught sight of the boat as she went drifting seawards; but the shadow of the night lay thick upon the breast of the sea, and the small structure was sunk in it in a blending that eluded the gaze.

When I considered I had swum far enough to render any such sea-glow as my movements would kindle about me invisible from the island, I put my whole strength into my arms and legs and swam with a vigour that speedily began to tell. The dim heap of faintness which the barque had made grew definable with the stealing out of its proportions. The outline of the hull shaped itself; then I could see the clear line of the yards and spars ruling the starry sky with the vaporous-like folds of the topsails hanging. I felt no fatigue, no cold; the silence on the land filled me with a spirit of exultation, and the animation of that emotion acted upon me like a cordial of enduring virtue. Gradually and surely I neared the barque; the swim was but a short one in reality, and I needed no rest, though rest I could easily have obtained by floating on my back for a while. Within twenty minutes from my first cautious taking of the water, my hand was upon the lowest rung of the little rope gangway ladder that lay over the side.

I held by it a little, to take breath and to listen. I had seen no figures on the vessel as I approached; but I knew that Forrest was on board, that the very piratical cast of the rogue's character would render him alert and perceptive,

that the moment he spied me he would guess a stratagem, and be upon me; and that it was my business to be before him, or to be prepared for his first spring, armed, as I knew him to be, with the sailor's invariable weapon, the sheath-knife.

#### ON SOME PHœNICIAN BOWLS.

Most people, it may be presumed, have heard of the Phœnicians and their voyages, but very few have realised with what difficulty facts in Phœnician archaeology have been established. Of this there is no clearer proof than the result of the French expedition under M. Ernest Renan in 1860, which, though authorised by government, and directed by the ablest savants, by no means satisfied the hopes of its supporters. Still, it succeeded in conveying at least one valuable lesson—namely, that in dealing with Phœnicia we must reverse the usual process in dealing with antiquity, and not look for monuments on the native soil of the people we are studying. The following remarks are concerned with one especially interesting branch of Phœnician metallurgy, which has been developed by discoveries anywhere but on the once busy Syrian coast. The factories of Tyre and Sidon turned out large quantities of metal bowls—gold, silver, silver-gilt, and bronze—elaborately decorated, and from their numbers evidently extremely popular. Their main interest, however, centres in the discovery that they are indubitably of Phœnician origin, and in the valuable lights they cast on the character and enterprise of this singular people.

The term 'bowl' is perhaps not strictly applicable to these vessels; they are more like our common saucers, though slightly deeper, with an average diameter of eight inches. They have no feet or handles. The method of decoration employed by the artists was repoussé-work, finished off afterwards with the burin and a free use of incised lines. Each bowl is double—that is to say, it consists of two plates welded together; the inner being profusely decorated, and the outer added to hide the roughness left by the repoussé-work, and for strength. Variety was one of the chief aims in the ornamentation, and to this end the inner surface is divided into concentric rings, in number from one to three, encircling a central medallion. This is filled with geometrical patterns, or groups of two or more figures. The bands are occupied by scenes of active or religious life, and by symbols and forms borrowed from Egyptian and Assyrian types, cleverly combined and skilfully executed. For instance, in a broken silver bowl found by General di Cesnola at Amathus, in Cyprus, the first band, next to a central eight-pointed rosette, is filled with winged sphinxes, the second with Assyro-Egyptian figures, and the last represents the siege of a fort, with Assyrian towers and archers, Egyptian woodcutters, and Cypriot horsemen. It is curious to note how the besiegers are as tall as the walls they are attacking, as in the Assyrian bas-reliefs. On other bowls we have similar mixed scenes, picturing lion-hunts, military processions, and religious ceremonies.

But, as has been said above, the interest of



these bowls is not due only to their excellent workmanship and variety, but also to the fact that the Phœnicians were their designers, and that these are the best relics we have of their metallurgy, which, next to the purple of Tyre, was their most famous product. 'We may even venture to say,' observes M. Perrot, 'that of all the products of the Phœnicians' industry the most authentic are these works in metal.' The Homeric poems abound with references to their triumphs, and their name comes up whenever an art-work of great excellence is to be described. The silver crater offered by Achilles as a prize at the funeral games of Patroclus was the work of Sidonian craftsmen, and Menelaus was fortunate enough to have received a similar present from the king of Sidon. At that epoch Sidon was overlord of the Phœnician cities, before the rise of the more famous Tyre. It will be of great interest to many readers to learn that the savants who have tried to restore Achilles's shield, as described in the eighteenth book of the *Iliad*, agree that that masterpiece must have been arranged in rings, as above described, and that the scenes depicted are evidently of Assyro-Egyptian origin. Their peculiar shape has assisted the preservation of so many of the saucer-like bowls; being almost flat, they have run less risk of being crushed, as has been the fate of most of the more elaborate vessels we know the Phœnicians made, from pictures of them in the tomb of Rekhmarah, in Egypt.

The bowls have been found in most quarters where Phœnician commerce is known to have flourished. They have been unearthed at Caere, Salerno, and Palestrina (Praeneste), in Italy; at Curium, Amathus, and Idalion, in Cyprus; at Camirus, in Rhodes; and above all, at Nineveh. As is the case with most Phœnician remains, there is a more marked deficiency of them in Syria than anywhere else; the constant series of foreign invaders, Crusaders, Arabs, Turks, &c., has destroyed architectural relics, and bodily removed all metal and other portable 'finds.' How, then, do we know that the bowls are Phœnician at all? At first, they were not known to be so, excepting in cases where Phœnician characters, presumably of the maker's name, appeared engraved upon the metal. Layard more than suspected that his 'finds' at Nimrūd were of Phœnician manufacture, arguing from the mixture of Egyptian types in the designs and Assyrian handling of the figures, coupled with the well-known metallurgic fame of Phœnicia, and its relations with Egypt first, and afterwards with Assyria. The specimens stamped with the Syrian letters proved to be of very similar character to those found at Nimrūd (one of which also was inscribed) and elsewhere. In fact, the real criterion lay in their peculiar style of decoration, the mixture of Egyptian and Assyrian patterns, and the frequent use of both without regard to their true significance—that is, only for decorative purposes. For instance, hieroglyphics have been found which, when translated, made nonsense. The conclusion was assisted by the fact that similar vessels, when of known Egyptian or Assyrian manufacture, were quite simple, not much made, and both nations a great deal too conservative to borrow so extensively from each other. Now, the Phœnicians were purely a

trading people, and much less influenced than their neighbours by considerations of nationality and religion. They manufactured to sell, and found that a judicious combination of various national and religious emblems pleased everywhere, and obviated the necessity of having to originate patterns for themselves. Anything Egyptian, with its bizarre character, in some ways resembling China or Japan at the present day, was sure to take, especially when cheap and appearing in useful guise.

The workmen must evidently have used pattern-books with their favourite Assyro-Egyptian models—to take a few instances, the scarab, lotus-flower, lion-and-bull encounter, long-robed Ninevite priest, &c., which recur so frequently. The general handling of the figures may be said to lean rather to Assyria than to Egypt; this is seen in the strict attention paid to details, and the vividness and accuracy of the lion-hunts and other natural scenes. Even the Egyptian types become less rigid and lifeless in Phœnician hands: the eyes, for instance, are treated with greater fidelity to their size and position in the head, and the attitudes are often much less strained. Curious examples of haste on the part of the workman are sometimes found, legs and arms being missing in some of the engraved figures. Such carelessness in otherwise excellent execution is probably to be explained by the enormous trade in these bowls, and the consequent pressure on the artificers. How popular they were in Assyria is shown not only by the numbers found there, but also by their frequent recurrence in the sculptures. They reappear in the *phiai* and *patere* of the Greeks and Romans, the forms of which they almost certainly suggested. In fact, the discoveries at Nineveh and elsewhere have disclosed to the world a hitherto unsuspected ancient industry, and one of the many ways in which Phœnicia systematised and cheapened the inventions of earlier races. In metal engraving, as in many other things, she made the West acquainted with the East, and though not an originator herself, fairly earned her name as the pioneer of civilisation.

## WILL PROVANT'S REVENGE.

### CHAPTER II.

BESSIE's fears that the attentions paid her by 'the handsome American' would reach her sweetheart's ears proved to be well founded. One of Steve's friends, who was engaged to Bessie's fellow-assistant in Mrs Fountain's shop, happening to be over in Egginton one day, encountered Steve on his way from work, and did not fail to enlighten him as to everything which had come to his ears, thereby raising a little tempest of jealousy in the young engine-driver's usually placid breast. It was not often that Steve went over to Scargill between one Sunday and another; but at nine o'clock the following evening he knocked at Denny Ford's door. Bessie, who knew his knock, admitted him, and her first glance at his face warned her that something was amiss. Scarcely did he give her time to shut the door before he began. 'What's this I hear,



Bessie, about your letting that American chap go walks with you, and about his making you presents of flowers and I don't know what beside?' demanded Steve in what for him might be called a white-heat.

Bessie could not keep back the tell-tale colour from her cheeks, and for a moment her heart sank within her. 'He's never walked out with me but twice, and then it was by no choice of mine,' she answered. 'He met me as I was coming home by the canal; and if he chose to walk by my side and talk to me, how was I to help it? After the second time, I took to coming home by the 'bus, on purpose to keep out of his way.'

'But he must have been on pretty familiar terms with you, or he would never have taken to meeting you of an evening,' remarked Steve shrewdly.

'Indeed, then, he 'was nothing of the kind,' answered Bessie with spirit. 'He used to come often to the shop, and he got to know me in that way.'

'And used to time his visits so as to have you all to himself when the others were at dinner.'

This Bessie was not prepared to deny. 'How was it possible for me to tell him when he should come and when he should stay away?' she demanded.

'But you needn't have accepted flowers from him time after time, and worn them in your dress. If you had been engaged to the fellow you couldn't have done more.'

'If I had seen any harm in it, I shouldn't have done it.—And, pray, where was the harm?' she added next moment.

'When did you see him last—I mean, see him to speak to?' asked Steve without heeding her question.

'To-day,' answered Bessie, looking at him a little defiantly, and with a bright spot of colour on either cheek. 'He came into the shop when I was by myself and—and he asked me to marry him.'

Steve sprang to his feet, muttering something under his breath. Then he sat down again. 'Perhaps you won't mind telling me what answer you made him?' At that moment he looked for all the world as if he would like to strangle Mr Will Provant.

'I told him that I was already engaged, and could have nothing to say to him.'

'Are those some of his flowers?' demanded Steve, indicating by a nod of his head a vase on the chimney-piece in which were the orchids Will had that morning left behind him.

Bessie quailed a little under her lover's scornful gaze. 'He brought them for me this morning; but I refused to take them. Then he forgot all about them, and left them behind.'

'And you brought them home to cherish and look at and keep you in mind of the giver!' exclaimed Steve passionately. 'Curse both him and his flowers! So long as you are engaged to me, you have no right to take presents from any man. Let his flowers go where I would jolly soon fling him if he were here,' he added as he rose, crossed the room, and snatched the orchids out of the vase. He was on the point of throwing open the window, when Bessie sprang to his side and arrested his hand.

'You shall not, Steve—you shall not!' she exclaimed indignantly. 'What have the poor flowers done that you should treat them in that way? They were forgotten and left behind, as I told you, and it would have been both childish and stupid of me to fling them away.'

Steve let her take the flowers unresistingly, but he turned very white as she did so. 'Oh, well, if you set such store by them, you must care something for the man they belonged to,' he said in his quietest tones. 'In that case, there's no more to be said. It seems to me that I'm not wanted here, and that I was a fool to come. The best thing for me to do, Miss Ford, will be to wish you good-night, and to trust that your dreams may be pleasant ones.' He had possessed himself of his hat while speaking, and he now turned and left the room without a word or a look more. A second or two later the front door clashed behind him. Bessie had made no effort to detain him.

But both Stephen Garside and Bessie Ford were far too fond of each other not to be made unhappy, after the fashion of lovers' unhappiness, by their little misunderstanding. Steve blamed himself for his foolish jealousy, feeling assured in his mind that Bessie's love was all his own; while Bessie blamed herself for her tacit encouragement of Will Provant, and for having taken his flowers home after the scene between them in the shop. When Sunday came round Steve found his way to Denny Ford's house as usual, but it was with somewhat of a sheepish feeling at his heart that he knocked at the door. As soon as he was inside, Bessie held up her mouth to be kissed, which Steve accepted as a token that everything was to be forgiven and forgotten on both sides. For any mention of his name that day there might have been no such person as Will Provant in existence.

A week passed without Bessie seeing anything of Will, and she began to hope that he had taken her words to heart, and that she would be no more troubled with his attentions. Sunday had come round again. After calling on Bessie, Steve set off for Warley, a village three miles away, to visit a friend who was dangerously ill. It was arranged that he should come back by the footroad which wound along by the banks of the Windle, and that Bessie should go part of the way to meet him. It was a favourite walk with our lovers.

The September sun was hanging low in the west when Bessie set out. She had got more than half-way to Warley without seeing anything of Steve, and had reached a point where the path she was following crossed the river by means of a high wooden foot-bridge with a flight of ten or twelve steps on either side of it. Bessie, busy with her thoughts, had climbed the steps and reached the level of the bridge before she was aware of Will Provant advancing from the opposite direction. Her first impulse was to turn and go back, but next moment she asked herself what she had to fear; still, it was with a heightened colour and a fast-beating heart that she went forward. They met midway across the bridge, which was only just wide enough to allow of their passing each other. Then Will came to a sudden halt so as to block the way.

'Good-even, fair damosel. Prithee, whither

away so fast?' he demanded, in the mock-heroic style he sometimes affected, as he swept her an ironical bow.

'Good-evening, Mr Provant.—Be kind enough, please, to let me pass.'

'Anon—anon. You have not responded to my question.'

'I am going to meet a friend.—Will you please make way for me?' She saw that he was smiling, but for all that there was something in his expression which made her blood run cold.

'To meet a friend!' he sneered. 'Why not speak the truth, and call him by his right name? You are on your way to meet your lover—the man who smells of oil and wipes his hands with greasy rags. Faugh!'

Bessie's temper flamed up at this insult to her lover. She gave a quick glance round, but not a creature was in sight. 'Will you let me pass, or will you not?' she demanded, staring Provant defiantly in the face as she did so.

'Not till you have paid the toll—not till I have stolen a kiss from those dewy lips,' he replied as he made a step forward and put out his arms to seize her. A cry broke involuntarily from Bessie, which was answered in a way the most unexpected.

Steve, when about a quarter of a mile from the bridge, on his way back from Warley, had seen and recognised Will Provant in the distance, and half a minute later had made out the figure of Bessie as she advanced along the footpath on the opposite side of the river, evidently on her way to meet him as arranged. Acting on the impulse of the moment, and without asking himself why he did so, Steve turned off into a belt of broken shrubbery which skirted the river a little farther inland than the footpath. Here he was invisible to any one at a distance, and thus it was that Bessie failed to see him when Will met her on the bridge and barred the way.

Steve, advancing quickly through the shrubbery, could hear the sound of voices even before he reached the bridge. For one moment a flaming thought shot through his brain that, maybe, the two had met thus by appointment, only to be dismissed the next as utterly unworthy of the girl he loved. Besides, had they been so minded, there was nothing to hinder them from meeting times out of number when he himself was out of the way. Still, as he came to a stand at the foot of the bridge, his heart seemed to cease beating, and all the landscape became blurred before him as he strained his ears to catch the words of those who were so close to him while yet unseen. The first sentence he could clearly make out was Bessie's question: 'Will you let me pass, or will you not?' A great torrent of rage surged through Steve's heart as Provant's answer fell on his ears, and he was half-way up the steps before Bessie's cry broke from her lips. Then it was that, an instant later, Provant felt the grip of a mighty arm round his neck, his head was wrenched violently back, following on which came a blow, as of a sledge-hammer, between the eyes, so that it seemed to him as if a ball of fire had suddenly exploded inside his head. With a yell of rage he let go his hold of Bessie and turned on his assailant, whose name he felt that he had no need to ask; but strong and wiry though Will Provant might be, he was no match

for the stalwart engine-driver, who was noted as one of the best wrestlers in the country-side. Despite his desperate struggles, his arms were presently pinned to his sides and there held as in a vice; then he was twisted round, his back was jammed up against the hand-rail of the bridge, and his body bent over it till he felt as if his spine must surely snap. Then his feet were suddenly knocked from under him, and while his legs described a semicircle in the air, his assailant let go his grip, and Will Provant, falling clean backward into the water running fifteen feet below, sank out of sight as if he were a stone. The struggle had not lasted more than a couple of minutes.

'Oh Steve, he will be drowned!' cried Bessie with ashen lips. She had been watching the encounter as though it were some scene in a nightmare which she was powerless to interrupt.

'No fear,' responded Steve grimly. 'The man that's born to be hanged won't be drowned.' Steve had occasion to remember his words later on.

As a matter of fact, Will was a capital swimmer. After coming to the surface, he dashed the water out of his eyes, and then striking out, swam slowly down stream till he reached a point where the shelving bank allowed of his landing without difficulty. After hastily wringing some of the water out of his clothes, he plunged into a plantation of firs close by and was lost to view.

About eight or nine days later, as Bessie was on her way home in the dusk of evening, she was aware of stealthy footsteps coming up behind her, which some instinct told her were those of Will Provant. A moment later, a voice which seemed to tremble with concentrated passion whispered in her ear: 'There's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip, my proud Lady Disdain. I wouldn't order my wedding gown yet awhile, if I were you.' Then the footsteps turned abruptly down a side street, and Bessie, without daring to turn round, hurried trembling home.

Scargill is situated on the Egginton and Swallowfield branch of the London and West-Eastern Railway. About three-quarters of a mile beyond Scargill station, going towards Swallowfield, the line crosses the Windle by means of a wooden bridge. Here there is a narrow gorge, some forty or fifty feet deep, at the bottom of which runs the little river on its way to join a much larger river a dozen miles farther on. The foundations of the bridge at the date of this narrative consisted of huge balks of timber, some of them driven into the sloping sides of the gorge, and others into the bed of the stream itself, while substantial cross-beams, clamped with iron, helped to hold each of them in its place and to make of the whole a homogeneous structure, which the trains had traversed in safety for something like a quarter of a century. As a rule, the Windle was as well behaved a little river as one could find anywhere, innocent of all vagaries, and running placidly on its way to join its elder sister; but now and then there came times and seasons when even its best friends would hardly have recognised it. Two or three miles south of Scargill ran a semicircular range of hills, an outlying spur of the 'backbone of England,' as it is often called; and after any lengthened spell of rainy weather,

the Windle, fed by countless streams from the Hoybeach uplands, was liable to swell to four or five times its normal size, and transform itself for the time being into a turbid, raging torrent, which, after flooding the low-lying lands on either side of it, when it reached the Scargill valley, the farther end of which was spanned by the railway bridge, rushed through it with a force and velocity which seemed as if they must carry everything before them.

As it fell out, the autumn to which our story refers proved to be an extremely rainy one; not for a dozen years had the Windle been known to rise so high and then to keep at that height for so long a time. Then a whisper went about that the railway authorities began to have some doubts as to the stability of Gripside Bridge, and it became known that experts had been sent from headquarters to examine it as far as it was possible to do so in the flooded state of the river.

About twenty yards from the Scargill end of the bridge was a signal-box, which necessitated the services of two men, who went on duty turn and turn about. With one of these men, Seth Gedge by name, Will Provant had become extremely intimate, owing, probably, to the fact that Gedge had spent several years of his early life in the States. They met of an evening at the *Ring o' Bells*, and when Seth's time came to go on duty, Will often kept him company as far as the box.

The river was still nearly at its highest, although there had been no rain since morning, when one night about dusk Bessie Ford took it into her head to walk as far as the Gripside Bridge to look at the flood. She had been rendered somewhat uneasy by a rumour that the passenger trains were to be sent round by Pettywell, but that the goods-trains, one of which was driven by Steve, were to keep on running as usual, and still more so by something she had overheard her father say to a crony of his the evening before as he leaned over the garden-gate smoking his after-supper pipe.

'Whether th' owd bridge is safe, or whether it isn't, is, m'appen, not for the likes of me to offer an opinion about,' Denny had remarked; 'but this I will say, that when I was fishing in the scaur last spring, th' watter being very low at the time, I couldn't help seeing how some of the balks looked as if they were rotted half-way through, so that I could scale thick shivers off them with my thumb and finger. But, there; if the gents as came over specially from Egginton say it's all right, why in course it must be all right; but in that case an ignorant chap like me might like to know why they've taken to sending the passenger trains round by Pettywell.'

These words had not failed to make a deep impression on Bessie.

So now, to-night, she felt as if she were drawn towards the bridge by some inward compulsion, which she could not have overmastered without an effort.

After passing the station a little way, Bessie crossed a stile which brought her to a footway through the fields running alongside the fence which bounded the line, and leading directly to the signal-box and the bridge. When a little way from it, Bessie diverged to the left, and crossed the grass to where a hand-rail had been

placed for the protection of pedestrians at a point where a landslip had at one time taken place. Here she came to a stand, and resting her arms on the rail, gazed down into the gorge. Surely, surely the old bridge, which had breasted so many floods in safety, would stand the strain of this one!

Presently she took out her watch—a birthday gift from Steve—and read the time. It wanted twenty minutes to nine, and at five minutes past the hour 'No. 5 Down Goods,' which Steve was driving, was due to pass the junction on its way to Egginton. She would wait and see it pass, she said to herself. Perhaps she might catch a momentary glimpse of Steve.

The place where she was standing was about thirty yards from the signal-box. She was putting her watch away, her eyes being fixed absently on the box, when she became aware of something which brought back her wandering thoughts to the time and place where she was. She felt nearly sure that she could distinguish the figures of two men in the signal-box! She knew how imperative was the rule laid down by the railway company that no signalman should allow any stranger to enter his box; she knew, too, that it was not the hour for the interchange of duties between Seth Gedge and his 'mate.' It was just possible that the second figure might be that of Mr Wilson, the station-master, or of some other official whom some business errand had taken to the box, but at so late an hour that was far from likely. Bessie's curiosity was strongly aroused.

On the open ground between herself and the box grew a few tangled bushes of bramble and blackberry. Gliding from one to another of them, Bessie presently reached a point which was not more than six or eight yards from the box. That there were two men in it she was now more firmly convinced than ever.

Half a minute later, Bessie would have been gone, but at this juncture the signal-box door was opened, a man came out, and, shutting the door behind him, descended the steps. Bessie drew her hood closer round her face and crouched behind the bushes. At the foot of the steps the man paused for a few moments, as if to look round and listen. As he did so, Bessie, peeping through the tangle of creepers, saw, with a gasp of surprise which was not unmingled with fear, that the man was none other than Will Provant!

#### HOW OUR BLUE-JACKETS ARE FED.

The statement that one pound of meat, one pound and a quarter of biscuits, one pint of cocoa, and one pint of tea, is the regulation daily allowance for each man, tends to impress one with the idea that there is something decidedly monotonous about the bill of fare aboard ship. It will be found, however, that although their tables do not 'groan under ponderous dishes piled with choice viands prepared in the most *recherché* style,' the food supplied to our sailors—from the time they enter the service as boys on a training-ship—is of a wholesome and substantial character. The quality, quantity, and—except under certain circumstances—the variety of their fare are such as might well



make the majority of working-men feel that they are not so well off as our 'jolly jack-tars.'

Dinner being the principal meal, we will start with that. It must be understood that the seamen, &c. are divided into messes, each mess numbering from eighteen to twenty men, half of whom belong to the port watch, and half to the starboard watch. Usually, the odd-numbered messes form the starboard watch, and *vice versa*.

A sailor is not called upon to decide as to sauces, entremets, ragouts, or any of those gustatory perfections and triumphs of culinary skill so pleasing to the epicure; he must be satisfied with 'boiled' or 'baked.' By the following arrangement he must perforce take each in turn on alternate days or—go without. Supposing to-day the starboard watch have a bake—'sea-pie' generally—the port watch must be content with a 'boil,' and the satisfaction of knowing that to-morrow this will be reversed.

One seaman is appointed from each mess as mess-cook for the day, and each man has to take his turn. His duties include making the pie or preparing the stew, taking it to the ship's cook, laying out the table, washing up, &c. Should it be the day for a stew—generally termed 'copper rattle'—the mess-cook prepares the meat, vegetables, oatmeal, and any other ingredients they are lucky enough to procure. This is handed over to the ship's cook, and 'called for'—in more ways than one—when dinner-time arrives. This is eaten together with biscuit; and of course it depends in a great measure on the skill of the mess-cook as to whether the seamen enjoy their dinner. Some have been so sarcastic and 'funny' as to advise the cook for the day not to fetch hot water from the galley as usual for washing-up purposes. 'It would be a waste of time, because he could find nothing more suitable than the copper-rattle, now the meat and vegetables are taken out.' This does not say much for the richness of the stew in that particular case.

This calls to mind an amusing incident which occurred on foreign service. The vessel had arrived in port on Christmas Eve, and hams being cheap and plentiful, many of the seamen 'clubbed' together and bought one each for their particular mess. As chance or ill-luck would have it, early on Christmas morning the ship's cook met with a serious accident, and the cooking of the hams devolved on an Irishman, who had not had any great experience that way. Thinking to simplify matters, Paddy decided to cook the hams—numbering some twenty or twenty-five—together in a large 'stock-pot.' Unfortunately, owing to the festive season, or the importance of the 'greatness thrust upon him,' or both, sad to relate, Paddy got 'half-seas over.' Not so bad, however, but that he had an eye to his business. Being determined the men should not have to wait for their dinner, and, like a 'good and faithful servant,' taking to heart the injunction that everything should be 'well done,' he had the hams boiling over the fire in what he termed 'ochins of time, me bhoy.'

This is a sample dialogue—one of many—which occurred at the dinner-hour. Enter mess-cook for his dinner.

'Well, me bhoy,' says Paddy, 'what's the number of yer mess?'

'No. 11.'

'No. 11 is it?' Looks at a paper on which he had been for some time previously making an evidently difficult calculation; then turning to one of the assistants, Paddy exclaimed: 'Two bones and three ladlefuls for No. 11.'

He had stewed all the meat off the hams!

'Bearing in mind' this anecdote, it will be plainly evident that the difference between good and bad fare depends to some extent on the ability of the cook.

With regard to the variety of the fare, the regulations will not afford us the slightest grounds to base any calculations upon. In these we find that one day the sailor is supplied with salt beef (junk) and pudding (duff); the next, salt pork and pea-soup; and the following, tinned meat (commonly called 'Fanny Adams' or 'Harriet Lane') and preserved potatoes. This, at any rate, does not say much for variety. We must, however, remember that these are rations served out only when at sea. When in harbour, fresh meat is allowed in lieu of salt meat, and in many ways the seaman obtains delicacies and relishes without 'touching his pocket.'

Take, for example, a vessel in harbour. In a mess numbering, say, eighteen, the chances are there are at least three or four who will not be present to take their allowance at dinner-time. Therefore, instead of 'taking up' eighteen pounds of meat—the regulation allowance of one pound each man—only twelve or thirteen pounds are drawn. This leaves the mess with five or six pounds 'to the good,' with which they are credited at the rate of fourpence per pound. By leaving a certain quantity behind, which if 'taken up' would only be wasted, the tar is supplied with the 'needful' for purchasing vegetables, &c., without drawing on his pay. These vegetables and other 'extras' are supplied by the canteen—in the event of there being no canteen aboard, by the bumboat men. The 'plus' mess-money is paid over at the beginning of each month, and the 'private' bill of each mess must then be settled.

Of course, in many cases the 'extras' will amount to a larger sum than the allowance of plus mess-money, sailors, like ordinary mortals, not troubling themselves as to whether 'both ends meet' or not until they are called upon to make them do so. Under these circumstances, the caterer posts the bill in such a position that all the mess may see it. On this notice appear the amount of allowance, the amount expended, and the sum required from each man to 'square accounts.' When settling-day arrives there must perforce be some grumbling, owing to the 'happy-go-lucky' way of doing business which is characteristic of Jack. Some individuals in the mess have enjoyed all the delicacies, while others are troubled because they have had comparatively nothing for their money. For example, take the man who has the 'last trick at the helm.' When he is relieved and goes below, he immediately rushes for the cook of the mess to know where his breakfast is, to be met only with the remark that 'not knowing he was at the wheel, none was "put up" [put by] for him.' If he is of a 'philosophic turn of mind,' he will take matters



calmly, and 'make for' the biscuit barge. Even then, as he lifts the lid, he may hear one of his messmates shout: 'You'll have to ship your beak'—this being the expression used, in sailors' parlance, to notify there is nothing but dust left in the barge. He has now nothing to satisfy his hunger, except grumbling, until dinner-time.

When cruising in 'foreign parts,' or stationed abroad, seamen enjoy many delicacies denied to their brethren at home, for they usually obtain 'something of everything' the port they stop at is noted for. Imagine the numerous kinds of fruits, &c., which they have the means of enjoying, and which are always easily and cheaply obtained. Then, again, while vessels stay at Ascension Island, some of the men are usually put on duty as 'turtle-turners,' and are allowed about fourpence—in addition to their regular pay—for every turtle 'turned.' It is at such times as this that the ordinary seamen may be observed regaling themselves on 'real turtle,' having what they term a 'blowout.' It is also on foreign service that cheap liquors are met with. This is a matter which can scarcely be mentioned as a benefit, for when intoxicants are so easily obtained, the temptation to 'overstep the mark' is harder to resist, and consequently, by 'having his fling,' Jack in many cases, unfortunately in too many, makes a 'beast of himself.' The 'cheap' drinks, for the most part spirits, are strong and fiery. Our tars not being accustomed to them, are soon overcome, and afterwards suffer for their indiscretion in health or pocket, sometimes both.

This brings us to the grog question. Each seaman is allowed half a gill of ship's rum daily; before he gets it, however, this is 'lowered' to what is facetiously termed 'three-water rum;' that is, the half-gill is made into half a pint of liquor by the addition of the requisite amount of water. Interrogate ordinary seamen as to the strength and quantity of their grog, and it will be found that the prevailing opinion is, that although the regulation half-pint of grog is served out, it does not contain the proper proportion of rum. The reasons given for arriving at this opinion are generally as follows. The steward—in the presence of an officer—stations himself at the grog tub at six bells, and adds—or, rather, is supposed to add—the requisite amount of water to make it three-water rum. He is assisted by the 'Grog Tub Staff,' which consists of the duty petty officers for the day, a sergeant of marines—and very often a corporal—the steward's assistant, and the cooper ('Jimmy Bungs'). Standing in the rear will be found the marine lamp-trimmer, ready with a cloth to 'swab up' any mess that may be made.

The Grog Tub Staff claim as a perquisite any grog that may be left after the men are served, and—a most extraordinary occurrence, either due to miscalculation or something—there is always a quantity of 'overplus' grog. Sometimes the quantity left is so large that the officer on duty may 'smell a rat' and order it to be thrown away. Whether this is true or not, it is of course difficult to determine; the fact remains, however, that in nine cases out of ten our 'jolly Jack-tars' are strong in their belief that their grog may be four, five, and even six—but three watered rum, never.

It would scarcely be fair to our blue-jackets to conclude this article without mentioning one great mistake made in their present system of dietary. From tea-time—about half-past four in the afternoon—nothing in the way of food is served out to Jack until the following morning at seven o'clock, when he obtains his breakfast. If he should require anything in the meantime—and who would not?—he must perforce pay for it or go without. This is not only a great mistake; it is a 'scandalous shame'—an evil for which a remedy should be found at once. Here we have men sent on duty—on night-duty, by-the-way, when the greater necessity for food will be at once apparent—so far as the responsible authorities know or care, with that weary languid feeling which always accompanies hunger.

The writer once heard it remarked by a man who had apparently tried it, that the hardest work he ever did was carrying an empty stomach about all day. Our wealthy and charitable country, who has to thank Jack for the high and secure position she now holds, allows, nay, forces her gallant defenders to remain without food to satisfy their natural cravings at a time when they are expected to keep a 'brighter lookout' for a period of fourteen or fifteen hours at a stretch.

## THE GIRL IN ENGLAND.

### AN AUTUMN IDYLL.

'LOOK, father; there he is.—Quick! to the right.'

'That young fellow in gray?—No, my dear; I cannot say I remember him. But I respect him for not getting himself into aggressively mountaineering dress. Carlyle lays it down as a maxim that a man'—

The speakers disappeared round the corner of the house, and passed beyond earshot, and the young man referred to leaned back in his chair with a sigh of great content. It was a hot August day, and the whole of the Grindelwald village lay parching in the brilliant sunshine that poured with pitiless intensity alike on white dusty roads and snowy mountains. This welcome and apparently unique stretch of shade in which he was resting, and in which some half-a-dozen young chestnuts were flourishing apace, was cast by the angle of the big rambling 'Hôtel de l'Ours,' in which he had taken up his quarters, and being early in the afternoon, it was well-nigh deserted by its usual throng of occupiers. Every one was either sight-seeing, or taking calm siestas in the little gaily-painted bedrooms which were boxed away so coolly behind their green 'persiennes.'

Adrian Lane shifted his meerschaum from one corner of his mouth to the other, and, picking up his pen, went on with the half-finished letter that was lying before him.

'... I have seen her again, and she recognises me. There's fame for you! She and her father—the visitors' book gives his name as Sir Leonard Villiers, but I have not got hold of her name yet—crossed the courtyard a moment ago, and she pointed me out to him. He is a pompous old fool, who seems given to making her remarks a

peg on which to hang his preachments; but she doesn't seem to mind. Perhaps she does not listen.—Have I described her to you? I forget, and I am too lazy to turn back and see. Well, she is something like the heroine of that novel of mine, "Lady Diane," which was to have taken the world by storm, only somehow or other it never got written. Do you remember how you used to bring your endless darning into my room sometimes, and sit and rate me for my abominable laziness, in the most diffident sweetest little way in the world? I remember it so well.

The writer paused a moment, for he heard a murmur of voices, and fancied Miss Villiers might be coming back again. With this idea he bared his head and stroked his red-gold moustache into yet more immaculate precision; being given to various harmless small vanities, and amongst them an insatiable desire to present a good figure, both moral and physical, in the eyes of any woman with whom he might be brought into contact. So, when Miss Villiers reappeared, and began a struggle with the obstinate latch of a door near him, he rushed to her assistance with rather an overshoot of alacrity, and won a grave bow and a 'Thank you,' before returning to the reminiscences which meant so little to him, and so much to his correspondent, a girl in England.

'I remember the first day of all, when I had just moved into my new lodgings, and found your step-mother a sort of feminine Micawber, aggravating if forgivable, and certainly not the stuff of which a model landlady is made; and about a dozen children, more or less, sprawling on the stairs; and my rooms untidy, and matters generally in a very unpromising state. And then there suddenly arrived upon the scene a slip of a girl in a straight black gown, with big steadfast eyes, which would have made her face too determined for its age, had not her lips quivered like a troubled child's as she apologised for the state of affairs and promised to right them at once. That was you, you dear little friend; and all the many times you have cheered me up when an irate publisher has thirsted for my utter demoralisation, and all the sage timid counsels in those April half-lights, count as nothing in comparison with the great help you are to me now by letting me write to you. I hope I don't bore you.'

Here he laid down his pen with a second sigh of self-satisfaction, for few things are more consoling than to run one's self down with the full consciousness that it is perfectly futile to do so. He knew she would not be bored.

Meanwhile, Miss Villiers had come out again—for such a reposeful-looking person she seemed in a singularly restless mood that afternoon—and stopped short with an exclamation of annoyance. Then she looked at Adrian. It was a straight comprehensive sort of look, with nothing of the coquette in it, and she called to him from where she stood: 'Can you speak German?'

'Fairly. Enough to be of service to you, if you will let me.' Adrian Lane went over to her. 'What is the matter?'

'I want tea out here, and the French and English waiters are not to be found. I do believe they are all asleep! The only man I can find is German, and apparently he could not understand what I meant.' She laughed. 'I am afraid that is not very astonishing.'

Adrian was all readiness. He went off at once, and being evidently in luck's way that afternoon, he came across the German waiter, tray in hand, and piloted him to the table she had indicated.

'He did understand, after all, you see.—And now, if you will allow me, I will go and tell your father that the tea has finally arrived. I saw him in the smoking-room as we passed it.'

Adrian was off again before she could answer, and Miss Villiers glanced after him with an amused smile. He was rather an officious person, she thought, but he was a gentleman, which always counted for something; and as they were leaving Grindelwald on the morrow, it really did not matter if in the meantime her father struck up an acquaintance with him on the ground of mutual friends. Sir Leonard was apt to make himself amiable to any passing stranger who would consent to listen to his rather meaningless dissertations; and dismal experience had taught his daughter that for some reason, which the two interpreted differently, men of Adrian Lane's type generally did so consent. So she was not much surprised when a few minutes afterwards they appeared together, and Sir Leonard introduced his companion as a great friend of the Courtenays.

'You were right, my love. We must have met Mr Lane in Portland Place,' said the old gentleman, placidly sipping his tea. 'Dear, dear! how small the world is! One meets friends in every quarter of the globe.'

Adrian had broken off a bunch of the chestnut leaves, and now stood silently watching his hostess, to whom he had given it. Had she been the Lady Diane to whom he had likened her, he knew he should have written that she made a pretty picture in her cool white draperies, with the sunlight glinting through the trees above upon her dark red hair. But as he was not writing, he knew the word 'pretty' would not describe her accurately. Why, the girl in England was pretty, with her big wistful eyes, and the fitful flush coming and going in her white cheeks. But this woman, whose slow delicious movement of hand and wrist as she waved her green leaves to and fro simply enthralled him—she was perfection itself.

'True, sir; that is very true,' he murmured in response to Sir Leonard's comment; and then, rousing himself with the recollection that the talking must be done by somebody, 'You have found it so?' he added interrogatively.

'Yes, yes. I remember it was at Hurlingham this season I met Barnes—"Mutiny Barnes," as they call him, and I said'—

The measured voice went on and on; but it might have been in an unknown tongue for all that Adrian could have vouched to the contrary. The dreaminess of her strangely light eyes? her utter disregard to his presence? He knew not what it was that so piqued and fascinated him.

'I know the Courtenays well,' he said to her when Sir Leonard's rounded periods had wound themselves out; 'but I have not met you there. I could never have forgotten.'

'Oh, but you have, for I recognised you. But the rooms were crowded; I daresay you did not notice me.' She spoke slowly, almost indolently. Not the vainest man on earth could have flattered himself upon her avowed recollection.

Adrian risked it; anything seemed to him better than a stupid silence. 'It was good of you to trouble to recognise, I think,' he said softly; and Miss Villiers fixed her eyes upon him for the moment before replying.

'I have an excellent memory for faces. I remember even dogs,' she said briefly.

This was certainly annoying, and so wrote Adrian in his neglected letter, for he had received an additional snub that night at the table-d'hôte, and felt sufficiently sore about the subject to add a couple more pages to the girl who might be less *crème de la crème*, but who was at all events more sympathetic.

'... She is distractingly beautiful; but you will see by what I have just said that sympathy is not her strong point. I hate an ungracious woman. You used to say that, thanks to your father marrying "Mrs Micawber," you had sunk too much in the social level to know what "real ladies" did; and you cried once, you silly little thing, about this very point. But I assure you such things are innate. You never spoke to a man in your life as Miss Villiers spoke to me to-day; and when I think of the work you used to get through, and your patience with those great lumbering boys, and of the way you used to brighten me up when I came home tired and depressed, it begins to dawn on me that I was an ass to come so far afield in search of the "one woman" you once said I needed to make me a more thorough man.'

This feeling, however, was of scant endurance, for a week later he wrote off a glowing account of recent events. The Villiers' idea of leaving Grindelwald the day after Adrian had succeeded in making their acquaintance, was balked in a summary fashion by Sir Leonard slipping in his endeavour to climb into the *banquette* of the diligence which was to carry them on to Interlachen, and breaking his leg. It was a clean break, and a doctor was fortunately close at hand, so circumstances, as the patient philosophically observed, were as favourable as they could be, but that could in no way shorten an enforced rest of some six or seven weeks. At Grindelwald he was, and at Grindelwald he must stay, and Adrian's arrangements were made in accordance as speedily, as though he also were the victim of fate. He instantly decided that he would stay too.

At that early stage of the proceedings it was manifestly impossible to explain at length to Miss Villiers herself his exceeding delight at the way matters had fallen out; and as sympathy was about as necessary to Adrian's well-being as the actual air he breathed, he wrote off at length to the girl-friend who never wearied of his confidences.

'Here we are in mid-August, and simply baked to death if we dare show ourselves out of doors. Luckily, this one is a good specimen of Swiss hotels, and there are plenty of big bare rooms where it is deliciously cool and solitary, when one feels like a friendly chat and smoke, and with green leafy nooks around the house, where the screening chestnuts not only shut in one's privacy, but shut out the cries of the coachmen and the general confusion of travellers coming and going, until the whole world seems blended into one great melodious contentment, which

centres in one's self and one's companion. Is this tall talk? I can't help it: I feel as if I were living the part of hero in one of my own novels.'

The pen lay limply between his idle fingers while his thoughts flew back to the lodgings in which he had lived until lately, and he wondered what its occupants were doing at that particular moment. There were not many to wonder about, he knew, for several of them were away holiday-making. The worthy lady of the house had gone for a week's change to Southend. She was never anything but kindly to the step-child, whose delicate features and little refinements of thought and speech were so different from those of her own sturdy brood, and had she cared, the girl could have gone with her. But she did not seize the chance. 'I suppose *my* relations aren't good enough for the likes of you,' her step-mother had suggested tartly; and so she was staying on in the stuffy London house, with the younger children to 'see to,' and with a lodger to satisfy, who was neither so friendly nor so sweet-tempered as Adrian had been.

Thinking over these facts, that young gentleman was tempted for the moment to write the poor child some account of the scenery, which he knew would delight her beauty-loving eyes, or of the amusing nothings of hotel life, which might lift her for the moment from the dreariness of Bloomsbury surroundings. But after all, it was scarcely worth while, for she did not know sufficient to be able to follow his descriptions easily. And so he left it; and a fanciful little rhyme, which was pretty enough in its way, about the hardship of a young girl's life being cooped up in town while the meadows and lanes cried vainly to be graced by her presence, and which came out a few months later in one of the magazines, was the sole result of the kindly lazy thought, which died at its birth. But time after time he wrote her pages of other matter in its stead, for of course it was necessary to explain to some one how foolish he had been in jumping to the conclusion that Reine Villiers was an ungracious woman.

'On the contrary she is, to me, the embodiment of fascination. . . . She stays with her father for part of the day, as of course do I. But the old man is an omnivorous reader, and as long as I can keep him with books and, above all, early readings of his beloved *Times*, he much prefers being left to himself. These leisure hours Reine and I spend together. You ask me if she cares to be with me as much as I do to be with her; I do not know; but I think she likes me.'

'I think she likes me!' It was to this humility Adrian Lane had grown some three weeks after Sir Leonard's accident; and it was just three weeks from that same event that Reine Villiers, who, if not quite possessed of all the virtues with which her lover credited her, was at any rate honest with herself, awoke to the knowledge that the promised tedium of her father's recovery had proved a mere phantom as far as she personally was concerned. She told Adrian so one still September evening, when the invalid had so far recovered as to be able to limp about with the aid of a stick and the younger man's ready arm, and the three were sitting under those self-same trees, through which the sunshine had glinted

upon that memorable day, when Adrian had first stood feasting his eyes upon her fresh warm beauty.

'I do not know what we should have done without you, father and I,' she said to him in her musical measured tones. Her eyes were shining brilliantly: was it the distant starlight or some feeling which was moving her?

'But yet you did not like me when we first met. Confess it.'

Adrian's voice, despite his easy words, sounded a little unsteady. Sir Leonard, a few paces deeper into the shadow of the house, was heedless of them both.

'I liked you.—No; I am not sure.' She glanced up at him as he stood beside her, and gave a little daring laugh. 'My Lord Conceit! You cared too much for yourself,' she said.

'And now I care for—you!'

A light breeze sprang up suddenly, and swept the murmured words from off his lips. It stirred Sir Leonard from the brown-study into which he had fallen, and he looked anxiously at his daughter. 'Reine, my love,' he said, 'I am wrapped up; but I fear you will take a chill. Will you not go into the house, or else walk about?'

'You will walk,' whispered Adrian.—'She will walk, sir,' he added aloud.

Sir Leonard sat up, and rubbing his eyes, peered out through the darkness at the receding figures. Perhaps the brown-study had not been so very deep after all, and the old man was thinking now of his own wooing and of his girl's mother.

There had been a long lapse in the letters which once had been written so steadily; but the outcome of that starlit walk was sent off at length, and in due time arrived at its destination in Bloomsbury. It so chanced that its recipient had the house to herself that afternoon, for the children were away on a school-treat, and their mother was drinking tea with a crony next door. When the letter was put into her hand, she had hungered for it so long that she resolved to play with her pleasure, and thus prolong it a little. So she clad herself in her poor best, and pinned in her dress a posy she had bought from a passing barrow, for it was her birthday, and she had a childish undefined longing that some sort of honour should be paid to her seventeen years.

'So you have come to have a chat with me, have you, Mr Lane?' She curtsied to the letter which lay upon the table before her. Then she slit the envelope. It was only a note, and so bright and cheery that the rest of the household might have read it at the same time without connecting it in any way with her suddenly whitened cheeks, and pitiful little gasp of tears she was too proud to shed.

'Are yer there, miss? Yer ma is 'ome, and callin' for yer like mad!' The servant's voice brought her back with a start to every-day duties and trials.

'He will be happy with her—God bless him!' In her earnestness she had spoken aloud, and if her voice quivered somewhat, the prayer itself was strong. 'God bless him; I mean—God bless them both,' said the girl in England.

### INCH-CAILLIACH, LOCH LOMOND.

[The island burial-place of Clan-Alpine, resembling, from Rossdhu, a reclining body with folded arms.]

No more Clan-Alpine's pibroch wakes

Loch Lomond's hills and waters blue;

'Hail to the Chief' no longer breaks

The quiet sleep of Roderick Dhu:

Enwrapped in peace the islands gleam

Like emerald gems in sapphire set,

And, far away, as in a dream,

Float purple fields where heroes met.

Inch-Cailliach—*island of the blest!*

Columba's daughter, passing fair,

With folded arms upon her breast,

Rests soft in sunset radiance there;

A vision sweet of fond Elaine,

And floating barge of Camelot,

Upon her brow no trace of pain,

And on her heart 'Forget me not.'

Forget thee, saintly guardian? Nay,

From distant lands across the sea

To this lone isle I fondly stray

With song and garland fresh for thee;

I trace the old inscriptions dear,

Fast fading now from mortal ken,

And through the silvered lichens peer

To read MacAlpine's name again.

My mother's name, a sacred link

Which binds me to the storied past;

A rainbow bridge from brink to brink,

Which spans with light the centuries vast.

Two hundred years! Clan-Alpine's pine

Has struck its roots in other lands;

My pulses thrill to trace the sign

And touch the cross with reverent hands.

All ruin here!—the shrine is dust,

The chapel wall a shapeless mound;

But nature guards with loving trust,

And ivy twines her tendrils round

The humble slab, more fitting far

Than gilded dome for Scotia's line;

The open sky and northern star

Become the chieftains of the pine.

The light streams out from fair Rossdhu

Across the golden-tinted wave;

That crumbling keep, that ancient yew,

Still mark a worthy foeman's grave;

But warm the hearts that now await

Our coming at the open door,

With love and friendship at the gate,

And beacon-lights along the shore.

Dear Scotia! evermore more dear

To loyal sons in every land;

Strong in a race that knew not fear,

And for man's freedom dared to stand:

Ay, dearer for thy songs that float

Like thistle-down o'er land and sea,

And strike the universal note

Of love, and faith, and liberty.

WALLACE BRUCE.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,  
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.